

Wrestling Perspective

• Analysis and Commentary From The McLaughlin Group of Professional Wrestling •

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But The Contract Says...

By - Paul J. MacArthur

Sid Vicious' recent departure from WCW has raised numerous questions about the promotions' management, their contracts and their enforcement. In March, Vicious demanded renegotiation of his contract prior to its September expiration, a strategy, that while common in baseball and football, was unprecedented in wrestling circles. Refusing to work or sign any extensions to his contract until he got a new deal, Vicious forced WCW to negotiate on his terms. Rather than enforcing the terms of the contract, WCW agreed to renegotiate and the two sides reportedly verbally agreed to a \$350,000 per year contract before Vicious backed out, in hopes of a better offer from Titan. WCW then rewarded Vicious for his selfless dedication to the company by letting him out of his contractual obligations early, and thus able to work for Titan immediately, in exchange for doing the job for El Gigante at the Superbrawl PPV.

The actions of Vicious in this situation were less than admirable. As a wrestler, he has not progressed very far since he joined WCW two years ago. When he punctured his lung in 1989, WCW continued to pay his salary according to the terms of the contract. They did not attempt to renegotiate the terms of the contract stating his value to the company was diminished with the punctured lung than without. They did not attempt to renegotiate the contract claiming Vicious could no longer perform and thus no longer an asset to the company. They, instead, paid him while he recuperated, hoping he would one day be able to return to the ring and they would be able to capitalize on his drawing potential. WCW did what was in their best interest as they prevented a possible lawsuit and had the opportunity to keep one of wrestling's future superstars. However, WCW also acted in good faith in accordance with the contract. They did this at a time when Vicious had no real value to WCW, the WWF or any company.

Good faith: a subjective legal term often used when contracts are under arbitration or end up in a court of law. When WCW paid Vicious during his recovery, the promotion acted in good faith. When WCW re-signed Vicious, they acted in good faith. When Vicious demanded renegotiation of his existing contract, he did not act in good faith. It was, in essence, a breach of contract. When Vicious re-signed with WCW in 1990, he was expected to abide by the terms of his contract. If he felt his value to the organization substantially increased during 1990 and 1991, the contract that should have been subject to his new added worth was the one he would have signed effective September 1991. Not the one he signed in 1990. But, there is a tendency among professional athletes to feel they are above the terms of the contract they signed. Ricky Henderson signed a contract, knowing in advance what he was signing and how much he would be paid. Feeling his value to the Oakland Athletics had increased over the winter, Henderson sat out until his contract was altered to his liking. Rather than accept his business decision, he withheld the goods he was contractually obligated to supply the Athletics. Rather than risk a full season sans Henderson, the team broke down and renegotiated his contract. Baseball, football and basketball players have been able to get away with this tactic for years. Now, Vicious has

joined the fraternity of overpaid athletes who accept no responsibility for what they sign.

The contract is a strange legal instrument. It legally binds parties to act in a certain manner, but is so often subject to renegotiation or arbitration that in sports and entertainment one wonders their true worth. Beyond exclusivity, there appears to be little in sports. Henderson wasn't going to play baseball for anyone until his contract expired. Vicious wasn't going to wrestle for the WWF until his expired. Specific performances are guaranteed to be rewarded by specific compensation. But when one breaches the contract, often that specific performance generally isn't legally enforced while the compensation almost undoubtedly will be. But under the good faith covenant, there are numerous assumptions made about each parties performance. Was Vicious negotiating in good faith or did he already decide to jump to Titan and talked to WCW with the sole intent of avoiding possible legal ramifications? If a wrestler refuses to do the job, should he be paid? If a wrestler is out with an injury he will demand payment, yet when he refuses to perform under the company's directive, he will also demand payment. Is that good faith? Is attempting to renegotiate a contract before it expires acting in good faith in accordance with the existing contract? Is refusing to renegotiate the existing contract acting in bad faith if the wrestler's value has significantly increased since the original contract was signed? If the wrestler's value has significantly increased, who is responsible: the wrestler who performed well or the company who gave him the exposure and push? When a company promotes a wrestler who acts in his own self interest and buries a wrestler who acts on behalf of the company, are they acting in good faith? In each of these situations there is a canyon open for debate. While many contracts are spelled out, the spirit of the contract is often what is enforced and that spirit varies depending on the individuals involved. The subjective nature of each contract and each situation is what causes so many lawyers to become rich while the parties rarely get what they were seeking. Regrettably, the only way to solve the problem is a clear concise contract that is mutually agreed upon that is not subject to renegotiation or arbitration. Neither party will sign such a contract in today's environment.

When two parties sign a contract they are expected to abide by its terms. Often, this is not a problem. But, for some reason in sports and entertainment, there is always some clause, covenant or salary dispute that leads to lengthy negotiation or arbitration. The immature attitudes of many athletes is certainly responsible for many of these problems. However companies often fail to reward their employees for a job well done. Under most WCW contracts, the wrestlers make the same amount of money if they draw 100 people to on arena or 10,000. They make the same money if they have four star classics or one star boredom sessions. There is often little encouragement for top execution. While many employers will argue the salary is the only reward an employee should look for, human nature doesn't accept that. Praise and monetary bonuses for excellent work is something that should be commonplace, not the exception. It gives workers a sense of pride and encourages better performance. The average General Motors employee received a \$200 Christmas bonus last year, while the average Ford employee received a \$2,000 Christmas bonus. Which employees are happier? Is it any surprise GM is consistently losing market share while Ford is considered one of the greatest successes of the 80s? A worker should go the extra distance for the employer, but the employer, in return, must go the extra distance for the employee. Otherwise, they will be resented, the employees work will suffer and resultant the employer's product.

Specific performance: another legal term used during arbitration and other legal maneuvering that often leave both parties with significantly less money while the lawyers dine on the Riviera. It is the one legal loophole the employee has over the employer. No court will order a baseball player to play baseball, an actor to act or a wrestler to wrestle. Nor will they require the baseball player, actor or wrestler to be paid while he refuses to perform. This loophole creates a situation where holdouts can cost the company money, lose pennant races or require restructuring of a Pay-Per-View. It puts the employee at a slight advantage for if he can hold out long enough, in effect, go on strike, he may control his own destiny with the ball club, studio or wrestling promotion. What the employers

must do in these circumstances is refuse to negotiate until the employee works within the terms of the existing contract. Then, they should consider negotiation of the next contract, and on rare occasions, after a 50 home run season, after a blockbuster movie, after a 6 percent buy rate, they could consider restructuring the current contract or supplying substantial bonuses. But, allowing the employee to control the cards makes the organization appear weak and will subject them to the same problems until they have the courage to stand up for themselves, take risks and enforce what is legally theirs.

A new door may have been opened by Vicious and WCW. Any wrestler who feels he is being underpaid could now threaten to take time off until their contract runs out or become conveniently injured and thus collect pay while they work out a deal with Titan. A dangerous precedent has been established by WCW in this situation. The wrestler who puts his own interests above that of the company's will receive better treatment from the company. Compare Vicious to Ricky Steamboat. Compare Sting to Terry Funk. The list goes on. WCW committed a strategic error when they accepted Vicious' terms. No longer will a wrestler feel any obligation to abide by the contract. Instead, they will act in their own interest, regardless of whether it helps the company or if it breaches the contract. Over the next year, WCW will likely find their top stars demanding renegotiation of existing contracts. The situation will be a mess, will cost WCW a great deal of money and could have been avoided. However when WCW looks at who started the problem, they will have no one to blame but themselves.

The Suspension of Reality

By - Rodney Leghton

Enjoyment of all forms of entertainment requires a degree of reality suspension. This applies to literary as well as visual arts and, of course, professional sports.

A well written story will convince the reader he is actually living in the Old West or solving a crime or that she is, in fact, being wooed by the handsome stranger or is being pursued by demons from another dimension or about to be abducted. Transposed to both the large and small screens, the same conditions apply. Thus we come to the soap opera.

In order to fully enjoy these programs, one must not only be willing to, but more than ready to, believe a person can change facial and physical characteristics overnight. A person can be a babe in the cradle one day, six weeks later be in school, six weeks after that be in college and a year to the day that she first entered the world, she will have a baby of her own. That a person can be the sweetest and gentlest person alive one show and within two days be the vilest and most despicable vixen imaginable.

Within the sports world, one is required to believe that grown men will don 150 pounds of equipment and spend hours bashing one another with the sole object being to move a strangely shaped ball from one end of a field to another. Sometimes it takes 25 minutes to move the thing five yards. A person must believe that other men would put on a lot of equipment, take a stick and beat each other senseless so they can put a disc of frozen rubber into a net. In this area, one also has to suspend belief in the amount of money these people make as well as suspending the reality that not everyone can perform at a given level each day or even each year.

Thus, the ultimate cross over: professional wrestling, which contains the best of both worlds. A well scripted and well performed skit will draw the viewers totally into the emotion of the moment. The WWF provides us with a need to suspend reality constantly. They provided the penultimate example at Wrestlemania VII in the Randy Savage/Ultimate Warrior match. This was an excellently worked skit and all the performers deserve high

praise. The Ultimate Warrior worked as hard as he is capable while Randy Savage worked very hard and sold his soul. Sherri Martel worked her derriere off and then some. Meanwhile, Elizabeth played her part to perfection.

But, let us consider all the reality that had to be ignored. Let us ignore the long lasting marriage of Savage and Elizabeth, that is supposedly a secret. There are still lots of things: first, we are supposed to believe that either Liz only appeared for Savage's match or that the cameramen and announcers just noticed her at that point. Next, we must believe that no one in the crowd noticed her or that they all ignored her (wonder if all those guys around her were Titan employees?). The next thing is we must believe that a performer with as little ability as Warrior can dominate a performer with as much ability as Savage. But, then, that is standard fare. We are supposed to believe the Warrior is invincible. Then there is the ending. We are expected to believe all the referees are absent or helpless. Also, there is either no security or they all saw Liz and expected her to run in. Then we must believe Elizabeth can instantaneously change from a demure lady to a redheaded streak of 100 pound lightning, who can easily dispose of this much larger and more experienced feminine foe. Then Savage wakes up and the referee conveniently tells him all that has been going on. There is a reunion and people stand and cheer and cry. Savage is changed from a hated heel to a beloved face in about five minutes.

Totally ridiculous, absolutely absurd, simply wonderful, extremely well done: the epitome of what professional wrestling is all about.

A Perfect Successor To Ric Flair?

By - Dean Knickerbocker

Sting's reign as world champion could hardly be considered a success. Attendance at house shows was at an all time low and the company was not drawing big money. After nearly six months with Sting as champion, WCW put the strap around Ric Flair for the seventh time. By going back to Flair, WCW was going back to what had been more successful. Flair gives a great interview, oozes charisma and arrogance, and most importantly, always wrestles a great match. He gives those who come to the matches a good main event and WCW hoped that making him champion again would start to move the company in the right direction.

However, every plan has a flaw, including this one. The problem with Flair has nothing to do with his wrestling or his ring character - it has to do with his age. At 41, Flair is getting on in years. I am certainly not saying that Flair can no longer wrestle because of his age, but noting that he will not be able to do what he does forever. Many who know the wrestling business have suggested WCW begin to groom a replacement to Flair; someone who they can work with over time. A person who can withstand the load as champion and hopefully do a comparable job to Flair.

Most felt Scott Steiner would be the best possible replacement for Flair. However, those same people soured over that idea after watching his match with Flair at the most recent Clash of Champions. Other possible successors mentioned have been Lex Luger, Barry Windham, Brian Pillman and Bobby Eaton. Yet, they all have some characteristic to suggest that they are not the answer. My advice to WCW would be to groom someone not currently within their company. WCW should go after Curt Hennig. I have no idea what Hennig's contract is with the WWF, but when it expires, WCW should go after him. There are three reasons why Hennig can help.

First, Hennig is an excellent wrestler. He is a hard worker and when matched with capable opponents, he puts together matches that are second to none. His recent matches with

Roddy Piper and the Big Bossman were excellent. He takes incredible bumps, probably one of the top two or three in the business, which would make the faces of the organization, such as Luger and Sting, look good when matched up with him. He also has main event experience as WWF Intercontinental Champion and AWA World Champion. Hennig would give the fans great matches which would hopefully put more people in the seats.

Second, he has the charisma to be champion. Like Flair, Hennig is good at being arrogant, which push him over more. He gives solid interviews, making him even more effective. Hennig actually reminds me a lot of Flair and that can only work to his advantage.

Third, the signing of Hennig would give WCW much needed prestige. To the casual fan, WCW looks like a minor league promotion. They have supplied the WWF with some of its biggest stars, including the Road Warriors, Mark Callaway, the Nasty Boys and now, Sid Vicious. It would be a feather in the cap of WCW if they could pluck someone from the WWF camp who is at the height of his career such as Hennig. This could help take away the so-called minor league tag they currently have.

There are certainly arguments against Hennig. He is inconsistent. How many memorable matches did he have with Kerry Von Erich? This is where WCW would have to bring him along. They would need to give him pointers on how to carry bad opponents. In WCW, he would have the opportunity to learn from the best. Flair could offer advice and experience that would undoubtedly help Hennig.

Is Hennig the answer? With the way WCW has been going, that is almost impossible to tell. But, he certainly has the skills and traits that suggest he could be. It is up to WCW to score a major victory and lure him to their company.

The Phantom Of The Ring

Recently, we offered the well known Phantom of the Ring the opportunity to write for Wrestling Perspective. Known for his writing in Ringside Reflector and Wrestling Eye, the Phantom is considered by many to be one of wrestling's foremost historians. This column serves an introduction to those who are not familiar with his work and a few thoughts on the current wrestling scene. We hope you enjoy and find him a worthy addition to our staff.

This is the first of what I hope will be many columns for this publication. I have been asked by the editors to contribute and am more than happy to take them up on their offer. For those of you who have already read my column in other publications, you know what I am about. For those of you who haven't, just keep in mind that no punches will be pulled and that this is a column from a fan's outside point of view. I claim no inside information. All I can promise is an honest column that I hope will entertain you, for that is the name of the game.

Before I begin in earnest, let me clear up a few misconceptions and set some ground rules.

I am not, nor do I consider myself in any way, to be an arbiter of taste. I only know what I like. I don't care much for the current state of wrestling and make no bones about it. I don't necessarily expect the reader to agree with me; after all, taste is an individual matter best left to the individual. But as long as I am invited to express an opinion in these august pages, I will not hesitate to do so.

I don't like the concept of "smartness" in wrestling and further think the whole thing is silly. I've often wondered about the nature of the "smart fan." First of all, one doesn't

have to be that smart to see wrestling is a work, and second, to whom can the smart fan tell this knowledge? After all, they despise the dreaded "mark."

The whole smart fan controversy intrigues me. I often believe that it is a compensation on their part to alleviate the embarrassment of being wrestling fans, especially in this day and age, where wrestling is geared to the tastes of the 7 to 14 year old male. Another thing that intrigues me is the smart fans use of wrestlers' terminology. The attitude of some toward the sport leads me to believe that they simply want to be in the game, to hang with the wrestlers. I mean, why else go to all the trouble of identifying oneself as a smart fan? But the smart, or inside fan, share a common trait with their brethren in other sports. I've spent some time with people who have inside knowledge in other sports, such as baseball. They too, know the ballplayers' inside lingo, and like wrestling's inside fans, wish to know the ballplayers on an intimate basis and brag often of who they know. I simply attribute being a smart fan to the same tribal urge that leads college students to join fraternities or cement dealers to join Knights of Pythias.

Well, now that this is out of the way, let's concentrate on what is going on. First, Sid Vicious' departure from WCW to Titan is a bit of a minor surprise, but while Jim Herd tried to get Vicious in the pocket book, Vince McMahon got him where every performer lives: in the ego. Vicious simply wanted the chance to headline Wrestlemania. But, if he thinks he's going to be champion, well, that's another matter. Although it wouldn't surprise me in the least to see McMahon do it, it would have to depend more on box office. I was told by three good sources that Vicious would accept the WCW offer. He supposedly didn't want to do the jobs he will have to do in the WWF and could continue to be a big star in the NWA. But Vicious must have seen the tremendous success of Mark Callaway as the Undertaker. Callaway was simply disposable in WCW, then goes to the WWF and becomes a big star. From an actor's point of view, I can't blame Vicious in the least. He'll probably get the same amount of money, be pushed more in a different character and have to do less work. Vicious was custom-made for the WWF; he'll fit like a comfortable shoe. Further, he's the perfect opponent for Hulk Hogan and the Ultimate Warrior in that he doesn't have the skills to show either one up.

Second, the most recent Saturday Night's Main Event had enough material for an entire convention on abnormal psychology and deviant behavior. The most stunning moment was when Roddy Piper chased Sensation Sherri with a Freudian broom stick between his legs. The low light of the show in terms of actual wrestling was the sub par performance of Ted DiBiase and Bret Hart in their showdown. I never thought a match between those two would bore me. How long will it be before Hart teams up with the British Bulldog? The Warrior/Slaughter match was boring beyond belief, hence the elaborate gimmick of the Undertaker in his coffin at ringside. Oh well, since McMahon has no Pay-Per-View coming up in the near future, why not waste a show?

Finally, the state of WCW is certainly rotten. Losing Vicious and resorting to contests would be enough to strike fear in anyone. But, WCW has only themselves to blame. They didn't know what Dusty Rhodes was about before they hired him? Then there is the Japan fiasco. WCW took what could have potentially been a great rematch and turned it into nothing. The least they could've done was build up Tatsumi Fujinami better - interview him, play back the controversy. With a promotion such as this, McMahon has only to worry about his worst enemy: himself.

An Interview With Tommy Young

To many wrestling fans, there will never be a better referee than Tommy Young. During his storied career as a referee, including 13 years with Jim Crockett Promotions and the NWA, Young was involved in most every main event. Young, who was forced to retire from the

business in November 1989, will be remembered for his one, two, not quite three count, chastising wrestlers, athletic ability and great bumps. In this interview conducted on May 3, 1991 by David Skolnick, Young discusses the match that ended his career, the NWA as well as his favorite bouts and wrestlers.

Wrestling Perspective: You've been away from the sport for about a year. What forced you to leave the business?

Tommy Young: About a year and a half. It happened on the 20th of November. The 20th of May will be a year and a half so just about that. Long time.

WP: So what happened?

TY: The original injury occurred on the 20th of November, 1989. Tommy Rich gave me a shove, but for some reason he lifted his leg when he shoved me and tripped me and I was out of control. At the time, 20, 25, 30 seconds before this had happened, the lights had gone out and it was very dim. I did this 15 years and I never missed the ropes before, but I missed them that time. When I missed them with my arms, my face stopped me from going out of the ring. My face fell into the ropes and I took the middle rope between my eyes that jammed my neck back and caused a serious hyperextension injury which momentarily crippled me. I couldn't feel anything at all for about 30 seconds. But when they realized this was a taping, when they realized I was injured, Nick Patrick and Mike Atkins came to the ring. Mike finished the match and Nick stayed at the ring. They got me out of there and we keep a chiropractor in the back on standby because so many guys have problems with their necks and backs and whatever other part of anatomy it could be. He looked at me and said, "Get an ambulance, better take him down to get X-rayed, he's kind of messed up right now." They strapped me down to a stretcher and by the time the ambulance came I wasn't feeling that badly. I was weak, but my strength had come back as far as like being able to walk, but they wouldn't let me walk. They made me lie down and get strapped down. Took me down there and there were no visible problems with the vertebrae that they could see. But, there were other problems and they wanted me to see a neurologist. So I flew back to Charlotte, the injury occurred in Atlanta. I saw a neurologist. She performed some tests and said things don't look so good. She wanted me to see a neurosurgeon which I did. I saw the same one that operated on Magnum T.A.. I saw him and he performed a myelogram on me himself. That told him what he needed to know. My neck was all messed up. I had to have surgery. He opened up my entire spinal cord and neck area and removed all the vertebrae that had blown every which way and closed me up but it left my spinal cord very exposed. Because of that, I can not return to the ring. If I get hit on the incision, I can be a quadriplegic. When they tell you that you can't return. There's just no way.

WP: When you got hit by Rich, did you know something was seriously wrong?

TY: I knew that I was in big trouble. I remember being out of control. I remembered my face... it happened so fast. It tried to get my arms out. I missed. My arms went through. I took that middle rope because I was falling down. I took the middle rope right between the eyes and I hear the most God awful (cracking sound) like that in my neck. I thought "My God, what was that?" I went down. There was no pain, no pain at all. It was feeling a total numbness. My body was tingling. There was no feeling. When it happened, I remember saying to myself, "My God, I'm in big trouble." You know you're hurt when something like that happens.

WP: Was it unlike any other bump you had taken?

TY: Oh, yes, of course. I'd never had my neck jammed back like that. The only thing I was thinking was please come back, the feeling. As soon as it happened, I was laying there I thought, "My God, I might be quadriplegic right now." The funny thing about it

was I have always been afraid of paralysis. It's ironic something that scared me so much, I almost ended up being just like that and still could be if I ever got back in the ring it could happen or if I get into an auto wreck or if I just fall, fall down a flight of stairs. I have to live with that fear for the rest of my life.

WP: So how is the recovery coming?

TY: I really don't know if you can call it a recovery. He took all the bone that was out of there that was causing all the trouble and he closed me up. A lot of people keep talking about rehabilitation but I tell them "man there ain't no rehabilitation." This bone was taken out of my neck and bone heals itself, but it doesn't regenerate. It's permanently gone and my neck, it was sore today. It's been a year and three months, maybe four since the operation and I'm really kind of disappointed that I'm sensitive to all that. That is frustrating, but what do you do? It happens and that's the way it goes.

WP: It's got to be an incredibly depressing situation when your career is done.

TY: Very much so because I was starting to make real good money. I had my best year in '89. I talked to Nick Patrick who took over my spot last year. What his earnings were last year, I don't want to divulge how much money he made. He told me what he made. It was better than what my best year was. He'll do better than that this year. They flew him over to Japan for that big match between Flair and Fujinami, although Alfonso did that one. But Nick did a number of other matches. I mean you think that doesn't bother me? Here I am sitting at home. The only time I ever went overseas for anything was an eight day tour back in 1985 in of all places, Kuwait.

WP: With the NWA?

TY: In a way it was NWA because the NWA engineered it. David Crockett went over and he was more or less the representative. I guess you can say NWA. But the thing was, it was supposed to be an international thing. A number of guys came from different areas. Bill Eadie, who was one of Demolition, went over. Hadn't seen him in a while. I forgot what he was. Black Bart went over. He was a Texan. We had another fella, he was Alaskan. I forgot his name. Sgt. Slaughter went over as the ugly American. J.J. Dillon, he was supposedly from Australia.

WP: How interesting.

TY: They called me a Canadian. Tommy Young, the Canadian referee even though I was American. Don Kernodle was over there. Jerry Blackwell was over there. Brian Adias was over there, representing Greece. They were just giving guys different... Nikita was there obviously representing Russia. Dick Slater was there representing God only knows what.

WP: Dick's one of my favorites. What's he like?

TY: Personally, I like Dickie. Professionally, I don't. I'll leave it at that. He's a nice guy out of the ring, very difficult in the ring because he is very unpredictable. He works at being unpredictable. Boy, he does a good job. He keeps me guessing. I never know what he's going to do. I have mixed feelings about Dickie. Personally, a very nice person, but I always had a difficult time refereeing him. That's not a slight on him. Maybe I'm the one who had the problem. But, a nice man. I like Dick Slater and a man you don't want to mess with. One very, very tough, hard nosed individual. He doesn't look for trouble, but, brother, he's one of the toughest guys I've ever met in this profession.

WP: He reminds me of Terry Funk in that way. Tough guys, not big monsters, but tough guys.

TY: Well, Dickie always seemed to have a fascination with Terry. He did a lot of traveling with Terry. He's pretty close to both of the Funks. I don't want to say he copied Terry's style. I don't know that I have the right to say that, but every time I saw Dickie I saw Terry and so did everybody else. I don't know whether that held him back or what. He certainly enjoyed a measure of success.

WP: He had a good run when you were around, back in '83 or so.

TY: Yeah, he was in and out a lot. He rarely stayed in one place very long. Dickie liked to move around a lot and I don't know where he is right now. I haven't seen him in a good long while.

WP: The last I saw he was working for Jarrett and Lawler. That was a few months ago.

TY: I think that's where Terry's been. I think Terry's out in California right now. I think he's doing some type of sitcom or something. I'm not sure.

WP: How is it refereeing one of Terry's matches? He seems like a nice guy out of the ring, but once he gets in there, he's all business.

TY: I first met Terry back in '76. I wasn't in this area long. I was working for Crockett and Terry was the champion back then and he was traveling. I refereed a match of his in Richmond, Virginia. This match will always stand out in my mind. Paul Jones had him in an abdominal stretch and Terry's yelling and hollering like he's in pain and all that. I got close and said, "How about it Terry? You had enough?" He hauled off and slapped me. Did you ever see a movie where the girls head goes completely around? That's what happened to me. He hit me so hard my head spun completely around, a 360. I remember going down and going "Aw f***!" What a belt. Disqualified him immediately. He was in the dressing room and he was like (imitating Funk), "I'm sorry Tommy. I didn't mean it Tommy." "Oh Terry, you know you mean it. You kill everybody you come in contact with." That stood out. Certain things for some reason or another will stand out in your mind. That is one of them. I didn't know Terry that well because he was in and out. Nice person. Quiet in the dressing room, very unassuming. Very, very similar in that respect to Jimmy Valiant. Jimmy Valiant would come in and sit down and you wouldn't know he was there. The second he goes out the door he jumps up and down, screwing around and all that. Terry's like that too. Once he goes out that door, he changes and that's the way I am. When I'm in the dressing room, I'm very quiet. "Hi guys, how ya doin'?" When I leave the building, I'm not flamboyant. I'm not the type of guy that likes to get on the dance floor and swing my butt. I'm very much an introvert, but in the arena, once I come out the door, I'm a totally different individual. I'm definitely playing a part. Maybe the kid in me is coming out. I don't know what it is. I'm a totally different individual and that's why I miss it so much because that has been taken away from me. The entertainment aspect of it. It all boils down to the fact that those people are paying their money for one thing and that's entertainment. They're paying to be entertained and I love to get in front of people and perform. I can't do that anymore and that's very difficult to accept. Getting back to Terry, I lost touch with him for a while because I always remained in the Mid-Atlantic area and he didn't have a real long reign as champion. I think he was only champ one year. He just did not work our area much at all. You rarely saw him. He basically stuck around a lot of Florida, Texas. I really did not see him for a long time until '89, when he came in and did the thing with Flair which started off in Nashville. When he came back, he and Flair more or less carried the whole territory on their shoulders. How used to doing that Terry is I don't know, but Flair ought to be real used to it because he's been carrying it ever since I came along. If it wasn't for Flair, I don't know where this area would have been. The funny thing about it is to this day, Flair and Crockett don't even get along that well and Ric Flair is the reason Jim Crockett had a franchise, which gives you an idea of how stupid Crockett is. But there's a man who had a multi-million dollar organization and he lost it all, had to declare bankruptcy. So that give you a pretty good idea of how stupid he is.

WP: What was the reason behind the bankruptcy?

TY: I can't tell you that. I'm just a referee. I don't know what the problems were behind the scenes. I know they were trying to compete with the World Wrestling Federation head to head. Crockett couldn't do that. It wasn't the same. In New York, they've got the media coverage and Ric Flair is obviously, anybody with half a smarts knows that Ric Flair is the greatest performer in our profession today. Nobody can even touch him. But Hogan has the media coverage and he does have gobs of charisma. Bless his heart. He's done extremely, extremely well for what he's done. This was way back in the early '80s, mid '80s. When did he really get going?

WP: '83 or '84.

TY: To this day, he's still hot. So you cannot take that away from him. Flair has nothing but respect for Hogan. He realizes what he's done and I do too. I've only met Hulk one time and that was at a party. I don't even think he'd remember me. What he has done, you can't argue with that. I think in a lot of ways, he's done the profession a lot good. So for that I say "right on Hulk."

WP: Do you think if Flair was in the situation Hogan was in he could have done more? He could have done less? Was it just Hogan was in the right place at the right time?

TY: Naturally, that's a hypothetical question. There's no way to answer that naturally. I would certainly think that if Flair had been given that position, he could have carried it further because his work in the ring is so professional. His interviews are so good. His appearance, I mean everything. He sat at the same table with the president right here in Charlotte when Jesse Helms, a senator from the state, was up for election and George Bush came in. Ric is also very close friends with Mike Campbell of South Carolina. That's how he met the president when they were having a fundraiser for Governor Campbell of South Carolina. Mike, who's very tight with Ric, and I'm friendly with Mike too, but not to the extent that Ric is, wanted to have Ric out at the mansion and all that. Ric met the president then. They kind of hit it off fairly good. When the president came to North Carolina to push Helms, to have a fundraiser for Helms, I don't know who wanted Ric. I don't think Helms did because Flair doesn't even know Helms, I don't think. I think it was the president that want the champ. When the president got up to speak and he started saying all these nice things, I thought he was talking about Jesse Helms, that's how much he put him over and he was talking about Ric. He really put him over big time. That had to be quite an honor. He was right at that table with him. The ironic thing about it was the president also wanted Wahoo, who's an old friend of the president from back in Texas. Bob Caudle, one of TV commentators, is a very big man in the Helms' campaign, he was supposed to find Wahoo and get a hold of him. Wahoo was really bummed out that he missed that as you would expect. I think that Flair, surpass him, I don't know how you can surpass Hogan. There's no way to answer that, but I don't think Flair would have done any less. I think Hogan ought to be tickled to death that Flair never came up there. Just like David Hebner is very happy I never got in. What do you do?

WP: You were there when Flair started hitting his stride in '79, '80. Did you know he was going to be that good?

TY: As far as I'm concerned, Flair hit his stride when he came back (from the airplane accident in 1974 where Flair suffered a broken back). I knew from the very beginning just how good he was. You can tell by the fan reaction. Charisma is something that is very, very difficult to put into words. I think like as far as charisma was concerned, I think I had it the most among referees that I saw. I felt I had the most for a referee. But 20 Tommy Youngs couldn't have made one Ric Flair. He was so good to me. I could go on and on about him. It's easy to talk about Flair because there's so much I can say. He's just done it all for me. I don't know if I ever knew what he was going to be, but it was just there. You saw it. You can go by the crowds. He brought in crowds back when he was just the

Mid-Atlantic champion. Any belt you put on him, it didn't matter. Any belt that he won, it didn't matter. The people knew that when Flair came out that door, there was going to be action. They knew they were going to be entertained. I'm not sure if that's the bottom line, but it's how I look at it. He's just got it. Plus he's dedicated. He goes out there and he's in that ring. He gets it right. He trains, he's the perfect statesman for our business.

WP: Also a guy back then who really did well was Rick Steamboat. He was his partner and rival for a while. He also seemed to evolve into a complete wrestler form the early '80s on.

TY: To me, Ric Flair is by far the best individual overall that I've ever seen. He could do it all, good guy, bad guy, so-so guy. He could do commentary, announcing, just with his appearance. Steamboat was a little more one dimensional, strictly the good guy type. But so good at that. So good at generating sympathy from the crowd. He and Flair to me were like bread and butter, eggs and bacon, cornflakes and milk, horse and carriage. Those two just went together. They totally complimented each other. The matches that they did in 1989, which ironically was my last year and you'd think I wasn't in the prime of my career, I was probably better when I was younger, at least physically, but I enjoyed those matches more than any. The one that I think I enjoyed the most was the two out of three fall match in New Orleans. All the legends were there. They had all the former champions and that was really nice since these guys are what made our profession and they were all there. They had such a great match. I didn't see it, but that was the same day as Wrestlemania. I heard that Bryant Gumbel said the next day, "Hogan and such and such good, but Flair and Steamboat, great." It was nice to be a part of that. The one in Chicago was extremely good. The one in Nashville, they had so many. Many matches back in the early '80s, they went to a one hour draw in Charlotte, Easter night. I forget what year it was. I think it was '82, '83. Just a sensational match, sold out the coliseum. One hour and the people (panting sounds) from all the emotional ups and downs. And of course, the big match in Troy, the I Quit match between Terry and Ric. A very different, unique type of format. I remember we were getting ready to do that and we were going to have one of those portable mics. We're getting ready to go on and I'm testing the microphone and the microphone ain't working. One of the TBS girls, who I'd never seen, she's just not worried about it and I'm telling her "Young lady, you don't seem to understand. We have to get a microphone and we have to get one fast. We are getting ready to go on camera, This is going to be live. We can't redo it. We do not have a microphone and the whole idea of the match is for the people to hear one wrestler or the other say 'I Quit.' That's the only reason I'm there. To follow them around with the microphone and give it to them whenever they want. That's all I'm there for." Makes you kind of wonder why that would be one of my favorite matches. Frankly, I don't know. But it was. I made sure I stayed close. The whole idea was to be close by so I could give them that microphone whenever they needed it. Of course, after the match all hell broke loose. As I recall, I think it was Gary Hart who bopped me with an iron or something. All hell broke loose in that match, but I really enjoyed those matches.

WP: That was really quite a match. The crowd heat was really intense.

TY: It was also different. I never worked in Troy. For us, it was only the second time and the first time I couldn't referee because of the commission. They're very funny there. I was lucky to do it that time. There was a lot of in fighting before they finally agreed to it. They're very stubborn for some reason.

WP: What was it? You wouldn't pass a physical?

TY: No, it was a political thing. It's all politics. I don't know the whole situation, but it's all politics. These guys, a couple of the commission referees come walking in and they kind of looked at me as if "who's this?" I loved it. These clowns are coming in here. These guys aren't even referees. They've got jobs and they do this on the side and they're coming in here. This is my living and they're actually trying to compare themselves to me.

One thing you'll notice is I've got an ego. I'm sure you've learned this by now. I thought more or less that this is great I more or less just sat back and thought, "Well, I bet they let me referee tonight." I know there was going to be trouble over that and I didn't hardly talk to them. I totally ignored them. A couple of them came up and asked for a few things. I would treat people the way they treated me. I was never uppity. There's no point to be. How uppity can a referee be? But, if a guy acted like an ass, I'm just like anybody else, I'm going to act like an ass back. But it was such a minor thing.

WP: It came off very well.

TY: Yes, it did. I thought it was very good show. I was glad to be a part of it. That's three individuals that we've talked about: Terry Funk, Ricky Steamboat and Ric Flair. Three of the finest individuals I've ever been in the ring or out of the ring with.

WP: I know another one of your good buddies is Jim Cornette.

TY: He's very temperamental. We've had our ups and downs too but you've got to understand Corny. He's very emotional and he gets wound up and what you see is pretty much what you get. He's like that. That's him. As I've told you, some guys come out the door and they're a different personality. Some guys come out the door and they're the same personality and that's Corny. Corny's the same all the time. What you see is what you get. Ain't no acting there. That's him. Very, very high strung. Very, very excitable, but extremely good at what he does. Extremely good behind the microphone. As good as anybody I've ever seen. Totally at home. He could put Howard Cosell to shame. I don't give a damn who it is, how witty they are, Corny's going to give them a go. Very, very good.

WP: He's also very good at ringside.

TY: Yeah, but his forte is really the microphone. That's where he shines. But you're right, he does a lot of things. He's a very good manager. The people either love him or hate him. There isn't much in between. He certainly gets the job done and he's still very much in demand. I have nothing but respect for him. He's a good friend.

WP: What's your opinion of his old team, Eaton and Lane?

TY: Without a doubt, in my opinion, by far to me the Midnight Express was Bobby Eaton and Dennis Condrey. Stan Lane is okay, but he was not the link that Dennis Condrey was. The team definitely suffered when Condrey left and Stan came in.

WP: That's so interesting. I feel the exact opposite way.

TY: A number of people do and I don't know why. If you watch Stan Lane, Stan Lane is more interested in posing and trying to look pretty than getting down and getting the job done. Dennis Condrey was not like this. It's nothing against Stan Lane. I like Stan. I respect him. I just don't feel he was as much of a talent as Dennis Condrey. Unfortunately, Dennis Condrey had a lot of personal problems that just did not work out. That is one of the main reasons, if not the main reason that he and Bobby broke up. He just disappeared one day and it hurt Bobby. It really did. Corny and Stan still maintain a good relationship and with Bobby too. Corny's still much in demand. As we speak, they're still trying to get him back in the NWA. But Corny's balking because he's more or less laid back and doing a couple of different projects. He's enjoying himself. The pressure is very, very difficult whether you work for the WWF or the NWA. They work you into the ground. Me, I thrive on it. I'm also single with no family which makes it so much easier for me. When you're married and you have a family, it's much more difficult because you have to spend sometime with your family. Flair tries to juggle it and does a pretty good job actually, but it's never easy.

WP: That was part of the problem with Steamboat.

TY: Very much so, yes. That is true. He just started back with the WWF full time. I think he'll have sometime off again and then he goes on a long tour. He'll be busy. I think his deal is two years. They were very smart to sign him up.

WP: You mentioned that when Turner bought the company you had fears that they were going to make you go down to Atlanta.

TY: Exactly. They put us under the impression that they were going to fly us only out of Atlanta. You can live wherever you want. Nobody can tell you where to live, but if your plane ticket says out of Atlanta and you're supposed to leave at 10 that morning and you live in Charlotte, North Carolina then you're going to have to hit the road at 5 o'clock in the morning, drive 250 miles to make that flight. When you get back from that flight and you've got some time off you've got to drive 250 miles back home. This is what we thought was going to happen. I love Charlotte very much and I don't want to leave under any circumstances. I thought, "Oh no, this is going to be a problem." It was the first time I really seriously considered going to the WWF. I knew that I could make more money up there, but I also heard that the pace was very hectic and it was more expensive to live up there. It thought, "Well, I'd like to see how far I can go in the profession" because you can go further up there as far as your name is concerned, than you can down here because this area just doesn't push it the way that area does. But usually when you leave there you don't mean a whole lot. Of course it's a different story for a referee. But when I thought I was going to have to move to Atlanta, that's when I contacted the WWF. All I got was a bunch of red tape. I could never speak to the right people. I finally thought, "F*** this. I'm not going to beg these people. If they don't want me, fine. I've still got a position, I'll stay here." I talked to Terry Garvin, who supposedly was running the referees, but he just gave me a song and dance. I couldn't get through to Pat Patterson who is supposedly the guy you have to talk to. I don't know what the problem was, but somebody was blocking me up there and I think I know who it was but until I know something for certain, there's no point in making accusations. The simple truth is somebody blocked me from getting in there and I can't imagine why Vince McMahon wouldn't have wanted me. At any rate, once I found out that it was not going to be necessary for me to move, then I thought, "Hell, I don't want to go up there. I'll stay here." And I did.

WP: You were there during Dusty's heyday. What's your opinion on how he was as a booker?

TY: He was obviously very good. He's done well in Florida. He did well here. He's back again at the helm as we speak.

WP: What's your assessment as to how he's doing now?

TY: Excellent. When Ole Anderson left, it was in shambles. Nothing against Ole, but Ole was living in the past. You have to move with the times and Dusty is very good about knowing what people want. He handled it very well here. I never did anything but make money when Dusty was around. I have nothing but good things to say about Dusty Rhodes. There's some individuals who do not like him as you would expect. That's going to happen when you deal from a position of power like he has. To me, he's one of the finest individuals I've ever known in this profession. I have nothing but respect for him. I think he did a hell of a job. I have nothing but good things to say about Dusty and his son Dustin, who's a real nice kid, very humble. He's going to be a superstar in this profession. Mark my words.

WP: Why don't you tell me a little bit about how you got started in wrestling.

TY: I originally broke in in 1973 in the Detroit area. A man named Lou Klein who mainly went as Lou Bastein, the Bastein Brothers, him and Red. He was running a wrestling

school and I went to see him and paid him. He trained me. I didn't have a whole lot of difficulty getting in and really it's not that good. It should be difficult to get in. But, then again, maybe it was good that it wasn't because I would have never made it. I broke in in Detroit as a wrestler, not a referee. I never had any aspirations of refereeing. One night, I was working part time. I had enough brains to realize I wasn't going to make it. I wasn't big enough, tough enough, mean enough. Just didn't have it and I knew it. I rotated the wrestling around my job. They asked me if I could make so and so. They'd call me at the plant where I worked, "No I can't make it." "Okay, we'll get someone else." It was a very loose situation up there. One night, I was in some small show and the referee didn't show up. They didn't know what to do. I said, "Why don't you just cancel my match. I think I can do it for you." And they did and I refed a match. It came very easily. Wrestling never did. I was never that comfortable in the ring. Refereeing came easy. I didn't care. I enjoyed it and it was fun. A lot of guys said, "You ought to pursue this. You'd be better off probably because you're very good at this. We need good referees." I started doing it more and more, strictly because that's the way the booking came. They were using me less and less as a wrestler and more and more as a referee. Then when the IWA formed in 1975 and a number of people that were with that organization were people that I'd worked with before who knew that I was a good referee. I had gone down to Savannah where they were doing their opening taping in January of '75. Once again, I had gone there to wrestle not ref. They didn't have a referee and I think it was Ronnie Martinez, who was a former announcer for Johnny Powers, a wrestler that never really made it that well but tried. But any rate, they knew that I could referee because I had done it for them before. I did it and the rest is history. A guy that was very instrumental in getting me into that organization was George Cannon. George Crybaby Cannon as he was mainly known. Very instrumental in helping me. Course, once I was given the ball, I carried it myself, but he was very instrumental in getting me the ball. That's very important and I'll always be grateful for that.

WP: From there you moved on to Crockett?

TY: Yes, that is correct. After the IWA became defunct. It only lasted 10 months. Then I moved onto Crockett and spent virtually my whole career under Crockett.

WP: So you've seen all the ups and downs.

TY: Oh, you better believe that. More ups than downs though. It's been good to me.

WP: What would you say has been the high point?

TY: Right before I got hurt. To me the high point was when Crockett got those planes. Take say Cincinnati. We'd be booked there. Cincinnati is 500 miles from here. You certainly can't drive it, at least not in one night. I'd drive out to the airport, park my car in the private parking lot, planes sitting right there, get on the plane, we all go, get to town, get the cabs or the rent a cars, work the show. They're getting the beer and food for us. We come back. We usually take off by 11:00, 11:30, depending on how far the airport was, depending on how late the show ran. Having a good time. You're drinking, partying, playing cards. You get back about 1 o'clock and you're home at 1:30 in the morning. You work Cincinnati and you're home in bed at 1:30 in the morning. That just did not happen. It was the greatest thing in the world because even though I'm single, I love being at home. The guys that are married, it's more important. Those planes really made it nice. They were around in the late '80s, '87, '88. But Crockett had to get rid of them. That was one of the big reasons Crockett went bankrupt. Because the planes were just too expensive to keep up. Even Vince didn't have his own planes. That was one of the big reasons the company went bankrupt. It wasn't the only reason but was one of the very big reasons. That was really nice. That was really a jet setting type of thing. The jet was even more so. That was only a 10 seater while the plane was 16. We didn't take the plane out west because we flew commercially out west. The jet would go, but not the regular plane because it was too slow. If we worked the Forum in Los Angeles, the 10 big

guys would jump on the plane and shoot over to Vegas and gamble all night. They were really rolling high. They were having a ball.

WP: And Jim was with them?

TY: Oh, Crockett loved it. He loved being around the wrestlers. Really liked being one of the boys. He had a ball. That was fun. The late '80s, '87, '88, '89, but I mean all the years were fun. I had a good time. I genuinely love this business. I genuinely enjoyed being on the road. Not so much the motels, but I enjoyed the trips, driving. They didn't bother me. I did a lot of driving. A lot of guys rode with me because I enjoyed driving. That's why I miss it so much, because it was such a big part of my life. Now that's all gone.

WP: So what does the future have in store for Tommy Young?

TY: I have no idea. Absolutely none. I've got a lawsuit going now. Naturally, I'm suing because they haven't given me any job. They just cut me loose so I'm suing. We will see what happens. After that, maybe I'll be able to get back in the profession. I just do not know. Right now, everything is up in the air.

WP: You've got two great stories. One is about Halloween Havoc and one is the Triple Tower of Doom. Can you relate those stories to our readers?

TY: Both are very ironic. Neither one was I all that instrumental, especially Halloween Havoc because the big match at Halloween Havoc, the special referee was Bruno Sammartino. I met him that evening for the first time. I'd spoken to him on the phone because I kind of looked after his son David, who came down in the early 80s to work some shows for Crockett, when he was first breaking in. I kind of took a liking to him, helped him get a car. I talked to Bruno on the phone. He must have thanked me 100 times about the way I looked after his kid. Very classy individual. I never heard anything bad about Bruno. That is so unusual in my profession. There is always someone who will knock you but nobody would knock Bruno. That tells you right there that the guy's got to be something special. I was looking forward to meeting him in Philly. I did. Very class guy. Very nice guy. I don't even remember the matches I did that night. I didn't do (the main event). I figured, "All right, I can get out of here early." This was a real luxury for me because I could never do that. I forgot who it was who asked me to stick around in case there was any difficulty. So I told Bruno, "I'm going to stick around, be at ringside, just watching if you need me for anything." "Okay Tommy, fine." Well, when we were getting ready to started, I was just standing around and the wrestlers were in the ring. The cage had gone down and I looked up and I saw one of the burlap sacks that were on the top of the cage, it was burning. I thought, "Ha! How do you like that? These guys think of everything." I thought it was part of the show. I was pointing at it to a couple of guys like, surprised we'd have burning sacks. The sack was coming apart. It was burning. Well, then I see one of our attendants running down to the ring with a fire extinguisher. So I climbed the damn cage. When I got to the fire I thought, "You fool. You're up here. What are you going to do? You don't have anything to fight the fire with." So I just started trying to beat out the burlap sack, burning myself. As I'm hitting it, it's disintegrating, sparks are flying. They're going in the audience. One girl's dress got burned. The audience, they were putting me over. They were saying "right on Tommy." I was thinking "I must look like a real fool up here." But we got it out. Muta helped. he blew some of that mist at it and we got the fire out. The fire department was there and they got upset by it and cut the power to the cage. That cage was supposed to have been electrified but because of the fire department, it wasn't. We couldn't do anything about it. You don't argue with the fire marshal.

Now, the Tower of Doom thing, that was something that was really, really wild. I'd never heard of this kind of match. Never seen it. I don't think anyone knew about it. I know whose brainchild it was, but I'm not going to mention his name. I get there having

no idea what I'm going to be doing. I go down to the ring. We were sold out in Baltimore, I think. If we weren't sold out, it was a very good crowd. I find out that I've got to stand at the top of this thing and open and close the door. I'm thinking, "oh no," 'cause I fear heights. I'm not going to try B.S. anybody about that. I'm scared to death when it comes to heights. When you've got to do something, if you have to do it, you can at least mentally prepare yourself like a little meditation. It helps me. But I didn't have any opportunity to do this and I had to go out there and it was one cage on top of another on top of another, like a pyramid. The top cage had very little room except for two guys to brawl away and bang their elbows up against the cage. It was that tight. Not only did I have to open and close the cage every two minutes, a trap door would open and one of the guys or two would drop down and two other guys came up the ladder to get in there. So, I had to not only open and close the gate, and there was very little room for me to stand between me and falling down, I also had to use the stopwatch for every two minutes. I had this stupid little airhorn that I had to blow off at the end of two minutes. I had heard these things at hockey games and such, but I really didn't know how noisy they were. At the end of two minutes, I'm already nervous as hell, I remember blowing that thing off and it went (airhorn noise). It almost knocked me clear off the cage. I thought, "This is great. This is just great." I'm trying to hang on for dear life, hold the door, hold the airhorn, keep the clock. I don't believe this. I'm looking down. I'm looking at the audience and people were poking each other and pointing at me and giggling. "This is just wonderful. This is just great. I must look like an idiot on TV." I can imagine what the commentators are saying. David Crockett realized I was in trouble because I made no bones about it. Fear had to be written all over my face because I was terrified. The cage was swinging, the guys are fighting in the cage and up at the top, it's going back and forth. I'm telling you, it was a scary thing. David ran up to the ring and said, "Tommy, drop the stopwatch." So I dropped it to him. He missed it and it splattered all over the floor. That wasn't a problem, we could keep a wristwatch. I dropped the airhorn. On top of all that, we got a late start and they had to spray paint the cage real quick and the paint was coming off the cage. It was getting all over me. It was getting all over the wrestlers. We had that match one more time and the other time we had it, I stood on the floor. We never had it after that. I tell you, it was embarrassing because at the end of the match that night one of the attendants came up and said, "I've got you Tommy. I've got you." And I'm thinking "beautiful, now these people see this guy coming up here to help me." I'm not fighting his help, not one bit. Even though there really wasn't anything he could do for me. But, I'm telling you that was not a pleasant experience. But it can't all be roses. There's going to be some ups and downs and brother, that was one of my downs. I had to look awfully silly up there. I really had to but what are you going to do? I'd have been laughing like hell if it happened to you or anybody else, but what do you do? It's just one of those things. Thank God I didn't fall off the damn thing and land on my head. Might have done me some good if I did.

WP: Thank you Tommy, is there anything else you'd like to mention?

TY: I just want to say that in my opinion, Ric Flair is the greatest performer by far that I have ever seen. I hope that does not upset anybody. If it does, that's something they'll have to live with because to me he is that much better. Ricky Steamboat, a class individual, one of the finest performers I've ever seen. He and Flair had, without a doubt, the greatest matches in the history of our profession. I don't think anyone could ever top those matches. I really don't. Dusty Rhodes, a lot of people will say some bad things about him. To me, nothing but a class individual who treated me well, whose done tremendously well in this profession. You take a look at him, let's face it, he's not Arnold Schwarzenegger, but, brother, he gets the most out of what he's got. That son of his will be a real superstar. Put in a good word for George Scott. George Scott was very instrumental in helping me with my career. You can be the greatest in the world, but if you don't get the opportunity to prove it... When I first came to the Mid-Atlantic from the IWA, Crockett did not want me. George hired me over Crockett's protests. I will always be grateful to him and George Cannon also. There are certain individuals who I have to say good things about because they deserve it. Those individuals that I have mentioned and

also the Funks. Terry in particular. Terry's really my hero. Brisco's are great guys. I can go on and on. I can write a book about it.

WP: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

TY: My pleasure. I'll see you down the road.

Sidelines

Thanks To Steve Beverly, Mike Gunderloy, Vic Stanley, Rodney Leighton and Wade Keller for their kind plugs. We appreciate the support.

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Summer Special • We are putting the Summer Special project on temporary hold as an important part of that issue has been delayed. However, we will be doing a special issue soon and will keep you posted on its development.

Next Issue

- Vic Stanley Returns
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